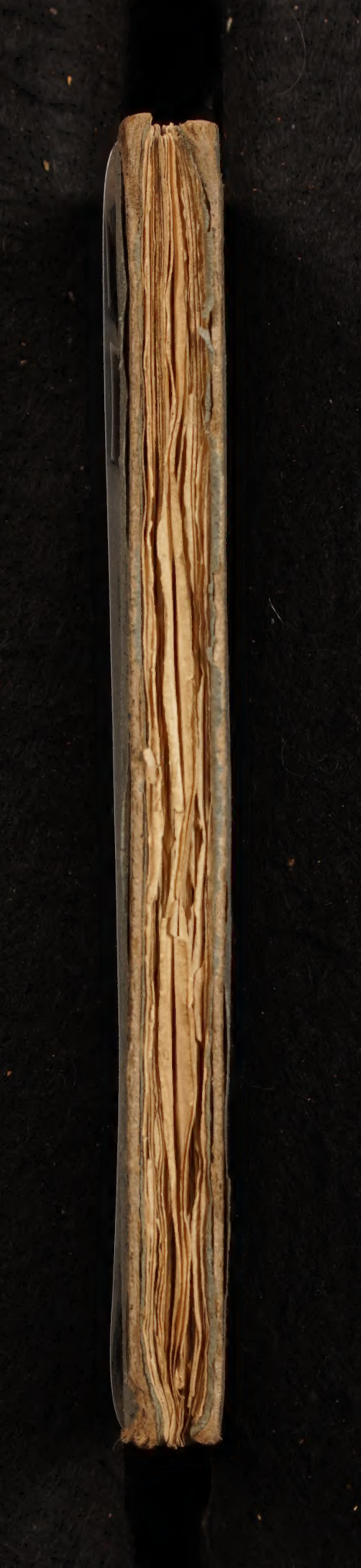
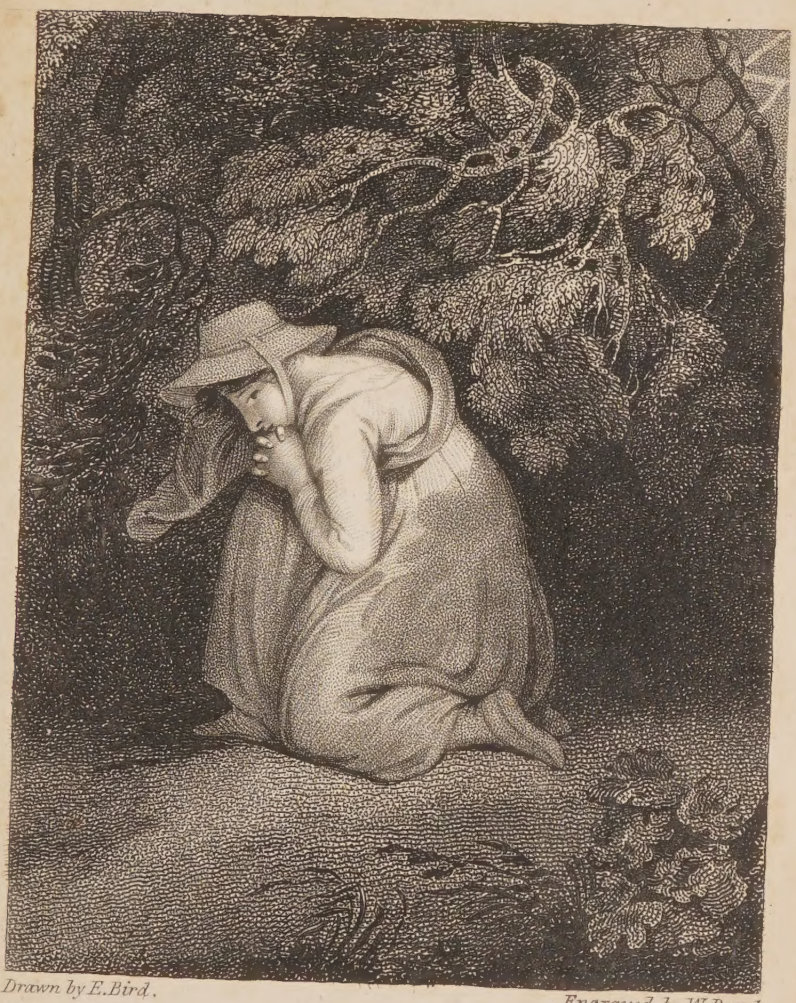
THE
COTTAGE
GIRL





Drawn by E. Bird. Engraved by W. Bond.

With firm clasp'd hands & visage downward bent;
Her faultring tongue thus gives to feeling vent.

Pub. Dec. 10. 1809, by W. Bond, Newman Street.

THE

COTTAGE-GIRL.

With the Author's best regards to his friend Captn. Codd.

THE

COTTAGE-GIRL.

A POEM.

COMPRISING

HER SEVERAL AVOCATIONS

DURING THE

FOUR SEASONS OF THE YEAR.

.....While Jane the Minstrell's queen
Happy herself; by ev'ry act confess'd——
The lowly Cottage-Girl may still be bless'd.

BY H. C. ESQ.

AUTHOR OF

"THE FISHER-BOY" AND "SAILOR-BOY."

LONDON:
Published by LONGMAN, HURST, REES and ORME, Paternoster-Row, and W. SHEPPARD, Bristol, 1810.
Printed by J. Browne, Bath.

DEDICATION

TO

MISS DAVIS,

OF

MORTIMER-HOUSE, CLIFTON,

DAUGHTER OF

RICHARD HART DAVIS, Esq. M. P.

FOR COLCHESTER.

MADAM,

Impressed with an exalted idea of the amiable qualities and expanding perfections of your mind, permit me to offer you this little effusion of my muse, as a token of the great respect I entertain for the philanthropy which already characterizes your disposition; nor, let me at the same time omit to assure you, that in thus presenting the harmless pursuits, the unsophisti-

cated manners, and above all the pure feelings of my Cottage Girl, I am only delineating a portion of those very excellencies which shine so eminently conspicuous in your own person:

With every sentiment of due respect

Permit me to subscribe myself

Madam,

Your most obedient Servant;

THE AUTHOR.

PREFATORY LINES.

TO THE PUBLIC.

IN order the reader may not be led to conceive that the Author intends to poetize the avocations of any more *Boys* and *Girls*, he thinks it necessary to premise that the present production is the last offspring of such a nature that will flow from his pen, and therefore trusts that from the success attendant upon the former flights of his Muse, the present Poem will not prove less satisfactory to the public.

As simplicity, in a work of this description, is the leading feature to be considered, the writer has scrupulously attended to the dictates of unsophisticated nature; the scenes introduc-

ed being the correct delineations of such circumstances as have come under his immediate observation, nor has he in any one instance annexed a varnish to mask the real *Truth*.

It is perfectly well known that several Counties possess their particularities, when we speak of a rustic life, it may therefore be necessary to acquaint the public, that the scene for the present Poem, was laid in Gloucestershire, and that every circumstance introduced is consonant with the pursuits of Cottagers in that part of England; but with respect to the general tenor of the Poem, there is not, the writer believes, an inhabitant of the Country but must allow the picture (taken in a general point of view) to be correctly delineated.

In regard to poetical ability the Author again begs to express his diffidence; he wants no favour, nor wishes to shun advice, and therefore offers his most sincere thanks to those

Censors of Literature, who have hitherto deigned to pass their opinions upon the previous efforts of his fancy.

As every introductory address of this nature should be solely confined to the elucidation of necessary points without having recourse to any verbose modes of expression, the Author here closes his preface with a well known line from *Seneca*, as applicable to his COTTAGE-GIRL.

Natura! quam te colimus inviti quoque.

Oh! nature, how,—even reluctantly, do we worship thee:

SPRING.

THE ARGUMENT.

Invocation to the Village.—Description of the Cottage Girl.—The Cottager's Store.—First employments of the Spring.—Spreading Ant and Mole Hills, &c.—The Cuckoo useful to the Husbandman.—Sowing Potatoes.—Thrush, Blackbird, Lark, Robin, Wren, Goldfinch and Linnet.—The Bullfinch.—Address to Nature.—Jane's Sunday and Weekday Dress.—The Village Crispin's Occupations.—Scare Crow.—Milking the Cow.—The Cottage Girl's Song.—Nursing and giving Suck to an Infant.—Setting and Hiving a Swarm of Bees.—Hen and Ducklings.—Crow upon the Sheep's Back.—Conclusion of the Season.

SPRING.

Come gentle *Spring*, Ethereal Mildness, come,
And from the bosom of yon dropping cloud,
While Music wakes around, veil'd in a shower
Of shadowing Roses, on our plains descend.

THOMPSON.

SWEET Village hail! to thee once more I roam,
In hopes to find the rustic Muse at home;
Whose simple tales no tenets can impart
To taint the manners, or corrupt the heart.
Here far from courts and fell ambition's broils,
Dwells gentle peace, conjoin'd with healthful toils;
Nor e'er did fashion's gaudy tinsel'd train
Disturb simplicity's primeval reign.
Here tranquil breaks the morn, and closing night
With equal quiet darkens on the sight:

Invocation to the Village.

No stunning peals, no shows to 'lure the eye,
Affright the soil of calm serenity :
No sound save that which notes the fleeting time,
As from yon Belfry's heard the solemn chime.
Here rolls no carriage to the midnight rout,
No morning breaks on Bacchanalian shout;
Stillness holds sway, save where the clarion cock *
Crows at each cottage door, the peasant's clock :
Who thus arous'd from sleep's entrancing spell,
(For where hard labour rests, sleep loves to dwell †)

* Least some ill natur'd Critic should endeavour to accuse me of plagiary I will transcribe the old Italian Proverb which so precisely coincides with the above lines,

Il gallo è l'orlogio del contadino.

The Cock is the Clock of the Peasant.

† ——————————— It is no matter;
Enjoy the honey heavy dew of slumber:
Thou hast no figures, nor no fantasies,
Which busy care draws in the brains of men;
Therefore thou sleep'st so sound.

Cottage Girl described.

Quits the plain rug and straight prepares anew,
His train of toil unvarying to pursue.
Such was good Ralph and such his course of life,
Bless'd with an honest and industrious wife;
And still more bless'd in having children twain,
An infant; and my Cottage Girl,—sweet Jane.*
A Child as blooming as e'er front display'd,
With purity and angel sweetness 'ray'd.
Jane, who thus lovely though of lowly birth,
To outward beauty added inward worth:
Her soul the signet of high heav'n impress'd,
Inclin'd to industry, by virtue bless'd.
She lov'd her parents and obey'd their nod,
Yet pious rear'd, still honour'd more her God:
Nor e'er was reason from one bias hurl'd,
The little village—her capacious world!

* I am a true labourer. I earn that I eat; get that I wear; owe no man hate; envy no man's happiness; glad of other men's good; content with my harm; and the greatest of my pride is, to see my ewes graze, and my lambs suck.

As You Like it.

From which, contented may she never soar,
And purchase sorrow, in research of more.
Time of her fleeting life had pluck'd the wing,
Twelve years curtailing—just as op'ning spring,
With natal sweets 'gan scent earth's airy sphere,
With roseat fragrance op'ning the new year:
From whence the Muse her simple toils shall date,
Amply contented with her humble state.
A state so lowly as to lay no claim
To sounding plaudits or the wreath of fame;
Yet conscious if she lacks poetic skill,
Simplicity at least must rancour kill;
Since real valour ne'er attacks the weak,
Be dumb then censure, nor assail the meek.

By frugal industry and constant pains,
Ralph had from penury amass'd some gains;
A cow he kept—his pigs were in the stye,
The garden stock'd for all his family:
Of cyder wou'd the orchard *quantum* yield,
From farmer too he rented a small field;

These, with some ducks and fowls, made up the
store;
Soft: three fine pigeons we will not pass o'er,
Nor those just types of his laborious care,
Some hives of bees, producing honey rare.
A cat he had, true mouser ev'ry inch,
And a white terrier staunch whose name was Pinch:
A dog that faithful at the door held guard,
And safe protected, poultry in the yard:
A worthy beast, that kept in proper sphere,
His friends obey'd and watch'd the coast was clear;
In fine, did all a terrier ought to do,
Deserving title of the staunch and true.

Now changeful March of days two thirds had told,
And ev'ry veering temp'rature enroll'd,
As Spring yet numb'd arose from Winter's bed,
And torpid shook supine her barren head.
Tis now with stick my Jane to fields will go,
And spread for pay the ant-hills to and fro;
Destroying thus the busy insects toil,
Which proves injurious to the fecund soil;

The Cuckoo.

Nor will she fail to level ev'ry mound
Rear'd on the surface of the grassy ground,
By that sleek subterranean miner's care,
The soft plump mole that shuns both light and air.
Thirdly, the Bard must that employment add,
When verdant soil by Cottage Girl is clad
With rich manure—as *beating* ground she goes,
And wide the grazing cattle's ordure throws.
To these another labour profit yields,
As Jane from stones is hir'd to clear the fields;
Which pil'd in hillocks all her toils display,
And from the farmer gains the well earn'd pay:
Who thus from knotch the edge of scythe doth shield,
When Summer calls forth mowers to the field.

Now thro' the East she marks Aurora's tinge,
Th' horizon crowning with a golden fringe;
And lists delighted to the cuckoo's lay,
Sure harbinger of Spring-times natal day;
Whose note tho' uniform swells on the breeze,
In cadence musically soft to please,

The Cuckoo.

Teaching the husbandman a lesson rare,
To know the certain temp'rature of air :
More true than calculations can impart,*
With all the studious toils of human art;
'Tis then with hair-tipp'd tongue this songster gains
Its insect food amidst aerial plains ;
Whilst ever and anon it will renew—
Type of its name—the simple notes *Cuc-koo.*†
Oft times when Ralph his little garden tends,
My girl assistance to her father lends,

* From the chearful voice of the Cuckoo, the farmer may be instructed in the real advancement of the year. Human calendars we know are fallible ; but, as the note of this bird depends upon a certain temperature of the air, these feathered guides point out to us the true commencement of the season.

† Shakespear's Song in *Love's Labour Lost* which has been so appropriately sung by Mrs. Jordan, in—*As You Like it*, affords a stanza truly illustrative of this migrating bird.

" When daizies pied and violets blue,
And ladies smocks all silver white,

Sowing Potatoes and the Thrush.

For planting; cuts with careful dext'rous hand
Potatoes: fruitful produce of the land.
Her piercing sight with ease each point descries,
And thus on ev'ry piece she leaves *two eyes;*
Which in due season procreative grow,
As brimful sacks the welcome produce show.

Now newly pair'd upon each buding bush,
Mellifluent carols forth the dark brown thrush;
Then darting down some insect seals for prey,
Or to the holly blithsome wings its way;
Whose coral berries to his taste afford,
A feast more luscious than the glutton's board!

Now Jane the black-bird greets with brilliant eye,
Smooth ebon coat and bill of saffron dye;

And Cuckow-buds of yellow hue
Do paint the meadows with delight,
The Cuckow then on ev'ry tree
Mocks married men for thus sings she,
Cuckow! Cuckow! O! word of fear,
Unpleasing to a married ear."

Blackbird and Lark.

His potent song thro' coppice oft will flow,
Or near the spot where thrives the missletoe;
Whose milk-white produce will his gaze allure,
A banquet most delicious to ensure;
While from the creeping, dark, green ivy oft
He plucks the clustering berries black and soft.

At early dawn the COTTAGE GIRL will mark,
With trembling wings the heav'nly soaring lark;
List to its dulcet and encreasing strain,
As pois'd it hangs blith minstrel of the plain;
Then by gradations sinking to the ground,
With pinions quiv'ring echoes wide the sound:
Till hov'ring some few moments o'er the nest,
Silent it plunges downward to its rest.

To greet new Spring the robin and the wren
By Jane esteem'd the Lord's sweet cock and hen*

* As the *Spectator* in the 85th Number has spoken in such favourable terms of the old Ballad of *the Children in the Wood* the

The Robin, Wren, Goldfinch and Linnet.

Adorn the bushes with their feather'd coats,
The female's duksy—red their consorts throats;
Whose harmony at morn wakes first the breeze
And latest sounds melodious thro' the trees,
While nimbly flitting by the wren will glide
Enlivening thus the mossy bank's brown side.

Oft in the orchard wou'd my lovely maid
Gaze on the goldfinch gaudily array'd,

Author trusts that the quotation of one Verse applicable to these innocent Songsters will not displease his readers.

"Thus wander'd these poor innocents,
Till deathe did end their grief,
In one another's arms they dyed,
As wanting due relief:
No burial 'this' pretty 'pair'
Of any man receives,
Till Robin Red-breast piously
Did cover them with leaves."

The Linnet and Bullfinch.

Whose pencil'd feathers party-colour'd show,
Red, brown, black, white, with saffron's brilliant
glow,
Whilst tipp'd with ebony, its iv'ry bill
Disperses notes exuberantly shrill.

Or on the white thorn pluming its brown wing
The graceful linnet perch'd, prepares to sing;
Whose gentle warblings swell the woodland lay
To greet of spring the breathy, vernal day.

Nor did my guileless Jane forget to note
The blueish bullfinch and his scarlet throat,
Of bulky form, with short, crook'd jetty beak
Crown'd with a coronet coal-black and sleek.
Whose notes uncultivated yield no type
Of those soft lays acquir'd from tutor's pipe;
Enchanting strains that prove the hand of art
More eloquence to nature can impart.*

* The Writer has introduced the song of the *Piping Bullfinch*, being in possession of a German Bird of this description, which in addition to beauty of note has given sufficient

Such harmony full oft my girl invites
Who lists to these attractive—soft delights,
A unison of sounds by nature taught
With melting modulation amply fraught,
In ev'ry movement rich—complete in time,
Gayness redundant :—sadness most sublime.

Thy page, O! gentle Nature let me hail,
Nature throughout whose works such pow'rs prevail,
That giv'st the rose Aurora's blushing hue,
And decks't the lilly with translucent dew,
Whose care with verdure clothes th' enamel'd mead
And bursts in earth the procreative seed;

---

proof of the extraordinary hardihood of the Bullfinch as well as his great sagacity. This bird, about five years back was thrown down while in the cage, when the leg and half the thigh were shattered; notwithstanding which on being taken up he in that situation pecked seed from the hand. After the lapse of a week the whole limb rotted off, since which period although always supporting himself on one leg and very frequently deprived of every feather during the winter, he is

Invocation to Nature and Dress of the Cottage-Girl.

Pliant to breezes maks't the ozier grow
And the stout oak to meet the woodman's blow;
Whose ev'ry produce shines sublimely grand,
And speaks the works of an Omniscient hand:
Thee, I invoke—O! let me rank thy child
And sing in strains untutor'd—artless—wild.

Pure innocence, with an untainted heart,
Requires no trappings from the hand of art,
Then blush not ladies at your minstrel's strain,
Who now shall picture vestments of his Jane;
No velvets, silks, or satins he'll record,
Fit raiments for the lady of a lord,

---

nevertheless in complete health and at the present moment in full song and as beautifully covered with plumage as any bird of the field. It is supposed that the Bullfinch in question must be nine years old at least: The Weavers in Germany export a vast number of them to this Country, where they sell for, from two to seven guineas a piece, according to the number of airs they pipe—The Bird of which I speak is master of two songs.

Dress of the Cottage-Girl and the Village Crispin.

Her garb was plain well suited to her lot,
Laborious inmate of the humble cot :
No coif enshrouding o'er her front was spread,
Bare to all winds the locks that cloth'd her head ;
Ringlets luxuriant curl'd, of dark brown hue,
Shading health's cheeks and eyes of heav'nly blue ;
Save when for church bedight on sabbath day,
Straw hat was worn with streaming ribbons gay :
A russet gown adorn'd her little form,
With green-stuff petticoat to keep her warm ;
While stiffned well with starch hung down before,
The checquer'd apron which my maiden wore:
Black worsted stockings neatly darn'd at heel
Her legs array'd—While shoes from skin of seal
Of strongest make, secur'd from harm her feet,
With bows of black galloon tied on so neat ;
Such was the suit my girl for labour wore,
Who for the sunday still possess'd a store :
In printed cotton gown so trimly dight,
With apron, petticoat and hose pure white ;

Village Crispin and Scare-Crow.

Slippers she had by village *Crispin* made,
Who followed equally the sexton's trade ;
While staves with lungs stentorian he wou'd sing
And foremost rank'd in belfry at a ring,
When peasants' wou'd some fete with peal record,
Mutton and turnip-trimmings their reward.
In this array my Jane wou'd also deck
With plaited milk-white whisk, her sun-burnt neck,
Which with the hat of straw tied on so neat
Beneath her chin—made out the garb complete.

O'er plough'd fields trudging labour to pursue,
My maid observant 'midst the same will view
The ragged garb for terrors badge design'd,
Dangling an harmless scare-crow in the wind :
Yet vainly thus the farmer strives to fright
The cunning bird ; for soon its wary sight
Discerning well the hollow ragged cheat,
It pecks devoid of fear the seedy treat.*

* In addition to what has been said by Mr. Bewick, whose statement tends to prove that *Rooks* and *Crows* are not so in-

The Scare-Crow.

Sometimes is wafted too, on ambient air,
The dismal howl of boy; set up to scare
Those greedy birds—who linger near the plain,
To rob the farmer of his ripening grain.

imical to the farmer as is generally imagined I must beg leave to insert a very curious quotation from Bernardin de St. Pierre, who in Study the 7th. states as follows.

"There are, it is admitted noxious insects which prey upon our fruits, our corn, nay our persons. But if snails, may-bugs, caterpillars, and locusts ravage our plains it is because we destroy the birds of our groves which live upon them; or because that on transporting the trees of foreign countries into our own, such as the great chesnut of India, the ebony and others, we have transported with them the eggs of those insects which they nourish, without importing likewise the birds of the same climate which destroy them. Every country has those peculiar to itself, for the preservation of its plants. I have seen one at the Cape of Good Hope, called the Gardiner's bird, incessantly employed in catching the worms and caterpillars which he stuck on the thorny prickles of the bushes. I have likewise seen in the Isle of France a species of starling called Martin, which comes from India, and which lives entirely on locusts and on other insects which infect the cattle. If we

Milking the Cow.

Now May-morn flow'rs, their perfum'd fragrance yield,
As Jane 'tends Cow in th' enameld field:

were to naturalize these birds in Europe, no scientific discovery ever made would be so beneficial to man."

"But the birds of our own groves are still sufficient to clear our plains of noxious vermin, provided the bird-catchers were laid under a prohibition to entrap them as they do by whole coveys in their nets, not to immure them in cages, but to make food of them. A fancy was adopted some years ago in Prussia to exterminate the race of Sparrows as inimical to Agriculture. At the end of the second or at farthest the third year it was discovered that insects had devoured their crops, and it was speedily found advisable to invite the sparrows from neighbouring Countries to re-people the kingdom with them. These birds it is true do eat some grains of corn when the insects fail them; but these last, among others the Weevil, consume the grain by bushels, nay by whole granaries. If however it were possible to extinguish the whole race of insects, it would be the height of imprudence to set about it: for we should destroy along with them most of the feathered tribes of our plains, which have no other food for their young while in the nest."

The author has particularly to apologize for the great length of this quotation, but having spoken of the Crow in his

Milking the Cow.

Kind *Snow-drop** nam'd who knows full well my
child,
Quite tractable to all her mandates mild,
As she with pail well-scour'd on wonted seat
Prepares to press the nectar yielding teat,
And while employ'd the luscious juice she drains,
Which spirting foams in pail—These feeling strains
In tones of sadness so melodious steal,
They prove her gentle mind attun'd to feel.

Poem according to the country ideas, he is anxious to prove that more deep research tends to vindicate the ordinances of Nature, which however sometimes incomprehensible are nevertheless founded on principles which are intended for our universal good; and that the subversion of them is only calculated to draw down misery upon ourselves.

* It is customary with country people to give names to their Cows, such as *Violet*, *Daffodil*, *Daisy*, &c.

THE

COTTAGE GIRL'S SONG.

The Orphan, or Blessings of Industry.

An artless child from village stray'd,
It was a little orphan maid,
  She thought her state to mend;
And thus for city bent her way
With sadned mien and torn array,
  In hopes to find a friend.

As thus she journey'd on the road,
She paus'd at ev'ry fine abode
  To beg a crust of bread;
Each surly drove her from their door,
There was a work-house for the poor,
  None heeded what she said.

And as each carriage whirl'd along,
Wafting the gay unfeeling throng
  She still her wants confess'd;
Yet out of ten scarce one was found,
To cast from window to the ground
  One coin to the distress'd.

At length half famish'd spent with toil,
She gains the highly vaunted soil
  And London's precinct greets;
Where naught but pleasure 'lures the sight,
From dawning till return of night
Where gold's found in the streets.

But Ah! poor child, no pleasures there
Repaid thee for thy toils and care,
  No search produc'd thee gold;
From morn till night; from night till morn,
Contempt was thine and abject scorn,
  For ev'ry heart was cold.

The Orphan.

Yet naught were all such taunts unkind,
Compar'd with scenes that shock'd thy mind,
And gave thy bosom pain;
'Twas then full many a struggling sigh
Made thee forget thy poverty
And wish for peace again.

As thoughtful thus the little child,
On step of door the hour beguil'd,
Fate whisper'd "banish grief:"
'Twas folly urg'd thee forth to roam,
Go seek anew thy village home,
Labour will bring relief.

A ray of hope illum'd her heart,
She rose impatient to depart
And blush'd that she should be,
Tho' blest with health a vagrant poor
And beg for food from door to door
The foe of industry.

The Orphan.

O ! pardon, Lord, my sin she said
And give me but my daily bread,
  Till I the village greet ;
I never will again despair,
But trust my Maker's fost'ring care
  And toil for what I eat.

With virtues glowing impulse fraught,
She acted as the lesson taught,
  And trudging back soon found
A secret pleasure thrill her breast,
Fatigue her body scarce oppress'd
  Tho' walking miles of ground.

At length the village soil she gains
And joyful greets her natal plains
  Where peace and labour dwell ;
To many a soul her tale she told,
All pitied as she did unfold
  The hardships which befell.

The Orphan.

The old advis'd, the youthful sigh'd,
But all alike the balm applied
  Employment thus she gain'd;
'Twas industry transform'd her dress
To new attire; from raggedness,
  And all her wants sustain'd.

Then let no idle wish to roam
Allure the young from peaceful home
  Afar their steps to bend;
For in the world 'tis rare indeed
To find in time of pressing need
  A kind and fost'ring friend.

Such can alone on friends place hope,
Who give to industry full scope.
  Labour will comfort bring;
Since he who on himself relies
The malice of the world defies,
  Far happier than a king.

Nursing an Infant.

Return'd from milking, on her loving arm
My Jane will oft her infant brother charm ;
Affording thus a mother's toils some rest,
Lull'd on a tender sister's doating breast ;
Who feels enchanted all the nurse's bliss
And seals enraptur'd virtue's chastn'd kiss.
In air, the baby, she will sometimes raise,
Then close embracing waft forth strains of praise,
Till nature's potent calls anew demand
The fost'ring cares of a maternal hand,
As fractious for its suck the infant cries
When quick the Cottage Girl to mother hies,
Her charge yields up—but first with love bestows
A sister's kiss on mouth where coral grows ;
Anon the parent 'kerchief throws aside
That shrouds the bosom from her darling pride :
'Twixt two fore-fingers that her babe may sip,
Guides the prolific ruby to its lip;
When instant ceases ev'ry peevish sound,
For lull'd in sweet contentments' joy profound,

Giving Suck to an Infant.

With eyes uprais'd the eager urchin quaffs
The balmy nutriment in copious draughts.
Sometimes its mouth the rosy gem sets free
To beam a smile of infant purity,
As on the mothers' well known visage bent
It speaks affection's language—eloquent.
Then to its harmless gums applies once more
The bosom's bud that yields the milky store,
While oft its hands will squeeze th' o'erflowing
breast,
As if quite conscious of the sweets it prest.

Now half the hours of blooming May were past
And all its flow'ry sweets were ripening fast,
As lab'ring Jane to ev'ry toil alive
Pays due attention to her garden hive.
Patient beside the same now view her form
Anxiously waiting the expected swarm ;
The polish'd warming pan in one hand see,
Of cottage door the other bears the key,

Settling the Swarm of Bees.

Ready—to ring a brazen clanking knell
And charm the swarm by this discordant spell;
The garish mid-day sun now gilds the glade,
No intervening clouds its lustre shade,
When straight a buzzing wakes my maiden's care
Assur'd the young to quit the hive prepare,
Nor long she waits; the tumult louder grows,
From hive the clangor of commotion flows,
When from the straw-wove mansion sudden fly
The swarm in search of some new destiny.
On brass resounding she repeats the stroke,
Then joyful views them like a dusky cloak
Array that currant-bush near which my Jane
To wring th' alluring peal, her stand had 'taen;
With heart high-beating and with motion fleet
She to her mother hies, who straight with sheet
From cot accompanies my maid to gain
The lab'ring swarm and all its sweets obtain:
Now o'er the bush the linen stretch'd they lay,
Which thus continues till Sol's evening ray

Hiving the Swarm.

Less fervid throws its influence around,
As length'ning shadows cool the fecund ground;
Then to the linen as the swarm adheres,
Joyful my girl the clinging store uprears,
Which careful she to empty hive conveys,
And 'neath the same the precious treasure lays;
Remaining thus till dark'ning on the sight
The shadowy curtain draws of closing night,
When with precaution to the hive Jane creeps
Which partly rais'd beneath the same she peeps,
And finding from the swarm the linen clean,
Forth from these insects and their honour'd queen
The same she draws, and leaves them to pursue
With dawn those toils they always keep in view.*
Tis now to gain of ducks an early brood,
Which yield the wealthy man delicious food:

* The picturesque lines here subjoined from Shakespeare's Henry the Vth. are added by way of note, being so beautifully illustrative of the subject in question.

Hen and Ducklings.

It's eggs, my girl, beneath an hen will place
In one month hatching the aquatic race:
A! what apparent fearful terrors then
Assail the instinct of the fost'ring hen,
To view that progeny she deems her own
No sooner hatch'd than to the water prone,

——————"So work the honey bees;
Creatures, that by a rule in nature teach
The art of order to a peopled kingdom.
They have a king, and officers of sort;
Where some, like magistrates, correct at home;
Others, like merchants, venture trades abroad;
Others, like soldiers, armed in their stings,
Make boot upon the summer's velvet buds,
Which pillage they with merry march bring home
To the tent royal of their Emperor,
Who, busy'd in his majesty, surveys
The singing mason building roofs of gold;
The civil citizens kneeding up the honey;
The poor mechanic porters crowding in
Their heavy burdens at his narrow gate,
The sad ey'd justice, with his surly hum,
Delivering o'er to executors pale
The lazy yawning drone."

Hen and Ducklings.

For then with ruffled wing and cackling sound
She'll pace with agony the pond around. *

With Spring's encrease as forth my maiden hies,
On village green her trusty dog descries
The duck with saffron brood that quacks amain
And waddles the protecting pond to gain,
Where soon arriv'd 'mid floods she 'gins to steer
Guarding her young ones safely in the rear:
While *Pincher* furious round the pond is heard
Barking responsive to the quacks of bird.
Blithsome from plain returning to her meal,
Jane's guileless bosom pure delight will feel,
As midst a flock obedient to the bell
Tinkling around the folds conducting knell,

* No individual that has been at all accustomed to the country but must have witnessed the scene above described, when the maternal fondness and terrors of the hen for her swimming ducklings, must excite commiseration in the breast of any one possessing natural feelings.

Crow on the Sheep's Back.

She views some sheep pursuing thus its track
And nipping food, bear on its fleecy back
The daring crow that conscious of no harm
Plucks of the wool to make its nest quite warm.

Such are the toils and pleasures that impart
Health and contentment to a guileless heart,
And like this Season's fostring pow'r refin'd
Act as the *Spring of Virtue* to the mind;
Deep in my maiden's soul those seeds instill,
That choak the rank corrosive weeds of ill,
Whereby the *Summer* of her life shall gain
A glorious harvest from the ripening grain;
So passion in *Autumnal* days shall cease
And crown life's *Winter* with eternal peace.

END OF THE SPRING.

SUMMER.

THE ARGUMENT.

Address to Simplicity.—Ralph Mowing and Jane the bearer of his Dinner.—Pincher's respect.—The Dragon Fly and Milch Cow.—Knitting Worsted Hose.—Flight of the Swallow.—The Martin and flying Beetle.—Bat and Moth.—Jane employed at Hay-making.—The Mow completed.—Nightingale's Song.—The Glow-Worm.—Sultry Weather and the Summer Storm.—The Lord's Prayer.—Consolation derived from Religion.—End of the Storm and Rainbow.—Corn ripe.—Reaping.—The Cottage Girl's Employment during the Harvest.—Finding a young Partridge.—Getting in the Harvest.—The Farmer's Feast described.—Jane Gleans after the Harvest.—Blessings resulting from a Cottage Life.

SUMMER.

"But yonder comes the powerful King of Day,
Rejoicing in the East. The lessening cloud,
The kindling azure, and the mountains brow
Illum'd with fluid gold; his near approach
Betoken glad."————————————

THOMPSON.

O! sweet simplicity, enchanting maid,
In snowy robes of innocence array'd,
Pure guileless offspring thou shalt still be mine
And to my Village 'lure the heav'nly *Nine.*
The glowing Summer now my lays invite,
O! may thy ripening treasures here unite;
Treasures that call my Cottage Girl to plain,
Producing health by toil and precious gain;

Ralph Mowing in the Field.

By farmer hir'd to meadow Ralph will go
The verdant pasturage with scythe to mow ;
His well-tim'd sweeping strokes that keenly pass
In semicircle swarths the wavy grass,
Till blunt by use from leathern pouch he takes
The useful rag-stone and by friction makes
A sound sharp echoing as the scythe he'll wet
And thus anew for use the weapon set,
O'er whose keen edge the thumb he'll lightly draw,
Till feeling there no harsh obstructing flaw,
To case again consigns the stone with speed
And 'gins anew to crop th' enamell'd mead.
Slung on her arm in wicker basket Jane
To field the noon-tide dinner will sustain,
While the refreshing cyder she with care
In large stone bottle to her sire will bear.
'Neath hedge for shelter from the parching heat,
The sun-burnt Ralph then takes his lowly seat,
And while from pocket drawing forth his knife
He'll ask how fares at home his babe and wife,

The Mower's Dinner.

Then 'gins the humble meal with pure delight,
Fat bacon season'd by keen appetite,
As *well bred* Pincher with respect will sit
Some paces distant waiting for a bit,
And when from bottle gurgles cyder clear,
The sparkling bumpers to his eyes appear
Rich as the nectar quaff'd by God's of old,
Ralph's cup but horn :—their's of the massy gold.
Now ended the repast my girl anon
Rises with empty basket to be gone,
While at her side the terrier wags his tail
And her return tow'rd cot will joyous hail.

Thus homeward trudging scorch'd by Sol's hot beam,
Oft will my maiden pause by rippling stream,
And view enchanted, ev'ry varied dye
That clothes the body of the dragon-fly,
Whose gauzy wings in motion buzzing pass
Swift o'er the surface of the liquid glass,

The Dragon-Fly and Milch-Cow.

Or when upon some ozier green it lights
The golden ray its lengthen'd body dights
With brilliant tints and varied to the view,
On scales as polish'd as the chrystal's hue.
To cot return'd at door my maid will sit
Toiling for father worsted hose to knit,
Till time arrives when she the pail must bear,
And light of heart to meadow green repair.
Where oft to milk her cow my little maid,
With willow twig drives o'er the bright green glade;
Prolific *Snowdrop* that obeys command,
Urg'd on by gentle words and lenient hand,
Then 'neath umbrageous foliage takes her seat
Draining white nectar from each surcharg'd teat,
Escaping thus the sun's all potent sway
That gilds sweet nature with its dazzling ray;
And busied thus as teazing flies assail,
The smarting cow will angry whisk her tail,
Which lashes oft my maiden's ruddy cheek,
Inflicting wails upon her skin so sleek.

Flight of the Swallow.

This task perform'd upon her head she bears
The pail with steady step and home repairs;
Then having pour'd in pans the creamy store
Anew she takes her seat at cottage door,
And there employ'd remarks with pure delight
The twitt'ring swallows wing their evening flight,
In sportive swiftness trace the airy round
Or rapid skim the surface of the ground;
Which sailing thus, alike possess the pow'r
With beaks distended insects to devour;
Those floating atoms that in myriads fly
Tho' scarce discernable by human eye;
These partial visitants alike display
Long bifid tails to guide them in their way,
Like rudders acting as their bodies veer
Of black and white:—To make them rapid steer.
'Neath eaves of houses now the *martin* too
From nest will flit perceptible to view,
Or if its young are hatch'd 'twill anxious heed
The wants of nature and with fondness feed

The Martin and Flying Beetle.

Its progeny ; fast clinging by the feet
Without its dry and kneaded mud retreat. *
And when grey twilight steals upon the view
Still harbinger of night in sombre hue,
The beetle horn'd she marks with shell-cas'd wing,
And buzzing flight that make the vacuum ring,
While oft impeded in its humming course
It strikes the visage of my maid with force,
Or if entrapp'd within her garments fold
Its legs adhesive fast retain their hold.

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* To this bird it may not be inapplicable to add a description of the *Heraldic Martlet*, so beautifully designated in the Tragedy of Macbeth, under the following lines.

"——————— This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting Martlet, does approve:
By his lov'd masonry, that the heav'ns breath
Smells wooingly here: no jutty frieze,
Buttress, nor coigne of 'vantage, but this bird
Hath made his pendant bed, and procreant cradle:
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observ'd
The air is delicate."———————

The Bat, Moth and the Owl.

And now the bat its drear abode will quit,
With thin membranous wings around to flit,
And wend laborious its unsteady way
In quest of insects serving for its prey;
This animal with mouse-like fur and ear
Dormant continues more than half the year,
By claw suspended, in some fell retreat
Where darkness holds her solitary seat;
And there for food when hungry on its prowl,
It serves full oft the solemn dappled owl, *

* The cunning of this nocturnal bird is admirably described by our inimitable Satirist *Butler*, where he says

"And as an Owl that in a barn
Sees the mouse creeping in the corn,
Sits still, and shuts his round blue eyes,
As if he slept, until he spies
The little beast within his reach,
Then starts, and seizes on the wretch."

Hay Making.

Whose *whootings* Jane conceives some horrid spell
As fearful listning to the rueful knell.
And when in cot 'tis there my maid will note
The silly moth with finely powder'd coat,
Nocturnal butterfly, that spite of care
My maid can't rescue from th' alluring glare;
Poor insect! yielding thus to man's estate
An wholesome lesson:—rushing to its fate!
For though it suffers by th' afflictive burn,
Yet will it heedless to the flame return;
Like headstrong man, deceitful folly's slave,
Bright reason's foe from cradle to the grave.

The grass now mown with fork my maiden gay
With village girls goes *tedding* round the hay;
In all directions then the grass they fling,
Pass country jokes or lovers ditties sing,
While with returning eve the field displays
The fading herbage which in cocks they raise:
Thus toils my girl till Sol's propitious heat
Dries up the grass which wafts an odour sweet,

Nightingale's Song.

As ev'ry female with her wooden rake
Collects it up to form the lengthned *wake.*
Then if no clouds portentous, augur rain,
Nightly they leave it thus upon the plain,
And when the beams of morn again appear
At equal distances the cocks they rear;
Raking around with care the verdure clean
With yellow mounds to stud the close shorn green:
The hay thus made for winter's use—'tis now
Carted by Ralph and others for the mow,
When loud huzza's in chorus oft they rear
Round the last load which leaves the meadow clear.

Now trudging homeward from the field at eve,
Fatigue, the nightingale will oft relieve,
Whose strains luxuriant melancholy flow,
Dejections solace;—balm of lovers woe:
'Tis then my Cottage Girl with mind serene
Attentive list'ning on the stile will lean,

With pent up breath least she should break the song
Warbled by sweetest of the feather'd throng;
Whose plaintive eloquence her bosom feels
Unconscious how the pensive pleasure steals:
A rapture neither wealth or pow'r ensures
But radiant innocence alone secures,
The soul's bright jewel of such matchless price,
In rags more splendid than proud ermin'd vice.

Sometimes when darkness veils the summer sky,
The glow-worm's light arrests my maiden's eye,
As 'neath some hedge it luminous displays
Its shining lustre to the wond'ring gaze;
When straight advancing she with motion bland
The insect places in her outstretch'd hand;
With wary gaze endeavours to explore
The little creature's *lamp*:—its beamy store:
Then lost in wonder she to verdant plain
The worm uninjur'd will restore again,

A Summer Storm.

With awe convinc'd that naught save God supreme
Governs the glow-worm and illumes her beam. *

Now summer half expir'd, the ripening corn
Impell'd by sultry breathings of the morn,
In motion undulary strikes the view,
A wavy expanse of light yellow hue.
No envious cloud now scarf's day's burning beam
That cracks the earth in many a veiny seam,
Whence oft the poppy flow'r rears high its head
Spangling with ruby studs the saffron bed.

* The male of this extraordinary genus of Insects, of the order of Colloptera, is a small Fly furnished with wings, whereas the female, from which alone proceeds this beautiful light, somewhat resembles the common Caterpillar. It never emits the luminous appearance but during the night of the Summer months, and when in motion: for if it be taken into a dark place in the day time it will not be seen to shine till it be disturbed; as during the day it lays in a state of torpidity.

A Summer Storm.

And now some days of sultry heat were past,
When furious driv'n by raging southern blast,
With fire electric fraught the tempest fell,
In distant thunders rolls a rumbling knell:
Now rain the elemental war forbodes,
As pond'rous clouds distil their liquid loads,
When Jane to 'scape the drenching of the storm
Crouch'd neath an hedge with speed secures her form.
Still louder cracks each fast approaching peal,
As swift around their fires red lightnings deal,
Nature convuls'd now wars midst realms of air
Showing by fire and din the conflict there:
And tho' my Cottage Maid no vice e'er knew,
Fear o'er her cheek now casts a paly hue,
With firm clasp'd hands and visage downward bent,
Her fault'ring tongue thus gives to feelings vent.

Our Father which doth reign in heav'n on high,
Thy name be hallow'd to eternity:

The Lord's Prayer.

Thy kingdom come, thy mighty will be done
On earth as 'tis in heav'n around thy throne.
Give us, this day, O! Lord! our daily bread,
Forgive our sins, as we by mercy led
The trespasses of others shall forgive,
And from temptation may we dayly live.
To evil never let our soul's incline,
The kingdom, glory, and the pow'r is thine,
For ever and for ever:—Let us then
Ejaculate unto our God—Amen. *

No longer fear controul'd my maiden's breast,
In her devotion's fervor stood confest;
She felt the solace of religion's love,
Blessing all those who trust in heav'n above.

* The author sincerely hopes that he may not incur the displeasure of any of his readers for this trifling liberty which he was obliged to take with the divine original composition of the Saviour, in order to render it consonant with poetic rules.

End of the Storm and Rainbow.

The storm receding distant peals rebound
And fill the airy void with echoing sound,
While perpendicular pours down the rain
Inundating around the sun-burnt plain:
At length more spent the storm abates its powr's,
And torrents change to light reviving show'rs;
While o'er th' horizon sol's puissant rays
Darting on dewy clouds; the bow displays
Of lively hues.—Sure Covenant unfurl'd,
That speaks—No Deluge shall destroy the world.
In distance now the thunders sound no more,
From cloudless heav'n the streams no longer pour:
By torrents batter'd low the corn is laid,
A glossy verdure carpets ev'ry glade,
While o'er each leaf pours down the spangling rill,
As fast the drops translucent thence distill.
From leafy covert now my maiden hies,
While the late fear-struck songster joyous flies,
And carrols hopping thus from spray to spray,
Greeting of sol the bright returning ray.

Sheep Shearing.

Jane's parent hir'd for farmer sheep to shear,
My maiden drives them to the wash'-pool clear,
Where sturdy fellows seize the struggling sheep
And straight emerge them in the limpid deep.
Their coats well wash'd my pretty girl is led
Forthwith to urge them to the shearer's shed,
Where Ralph prepar'd each curly fleece quick lops
As on the sheet with shears the wool he crops;
And of their cov'rings eas'd the same in fleece
By shearer roll'd.—The sheep again in peace
The meadow pace and nip the herbage sweet,
To yield in season full grown wholesome meat.

Days orb now ent'ring *Virgo's* scorching *sign*,
The corn well ripened and the weather fine,
With reap-hook Ralph to labour hard is led,
The sweltry day beams scorching o'er his head;
While moisture streams his ruddy cheeks adown,
And starting drops anoint his skin so brown.
'Tis now the subject of the minstrel's song
Laborious toils amidst the female throng,

Reaping and finding a Partridge.

The corn with care collecting into sheaves,
Nor willingly behind one ear she leaves.
Now hark !—good Ralph aloud my maiden hails,
When she who ne'er at father's bidding fails,
With speed repairs his honour'd will to know :
Ah ! with what transport does her bosom glow ;
From stubble ta'en and just half fledg'd, to view
A partridge, which Ralph cries "My girl's for you."*
The treasure she with gentleness receives,
The gift oft kisses, and the bird then leaves
In hat of straw, and cautious places there
'Kerchief to save it, for her fost'ring care.
Then back returning to her labour straight
Collecting sheaves she'll prop from six to eight :

* It is by no means uncommon for the reaper to find young birds of this description during the corn harvest, as the writer has frequently seen whole coveys rearing at a farm house, at the beginning of the autumnal season.

Getting in the Harvest.

And building thus the shock with ears on high,
Anxious my girl on bonnet bends her eye,
Hoping the partridge may securely rest
And on her bosom find at night—a nest.
Or if by closing eve they can't prepare
Of wheat sufficient for the mow to bear,
The round and high pil 'd *Pook** the reaper rears,
Placing tow'rd centre the prolific ears.
But when in waggon golden grain is pack'd,
By team 'tis forthwith wafted to be stack'd,
When ev'ry sheave they with precision stow
And rear with care the ample wheaten mow;

* With regard to the word *Pook*, which I have spelt as pronounced by the reapers, as it is to be found in no Dictionary, I must acquaint the reader that it is the term used by persons employed at harvest to designate the raising a circular mow, some three or four yards in heighth, by which means should any rain descend the corn is preserved from the baneful effects which might otherwise accrue from the drenching of the element, if only exposed in *shocks* upon the field.

Feast at Harvest Home.

Which once compleat, and clear'd the stubbled fields,
The wealthy farmer to his people yields
A glorious treat, as village friends will come
With Jane to share the feast of *harvest home.*
Then pewter dishes to the guests afford
Beef, mutton and plumb-puddings on the board,
As brim full cans display the frothy beer,
And jugs of ale invite in potions clear:
Facetious *Crispin* sings his annual song
Of thirty staves with chorus slow and long;
The thresher Dick his comic tale recites,
While Ralph's sea ditty adds to their delights;
Fair Nan, the dairy-maid, attunes her strain
To tell of Mary's death and William's pain,
As sweet-heart Tom beside her loving plac'd
With circling arm entwines her lovely waist,
And while his doating look the tale devours
He seems to say—such fate shall ne'er be our's.

Gleaning after Harvest.

Ere dawn of day their mental pow'rs opprest
Warn them to court the sweets of soothing rest;
When home return'd on welcome pallet laid,
Their sound repose no mental pangs invade,
Bless'd with content, no ills their thoughts controul,
And fancy's visions but enchant the soul.

Of lab'ring Ralph it next becomes the lot
To thatch the mow, while Jane within the cot
After due aid unto her mother lent
To stubble hies on gleaning now intent, *
Each corner of her apron well insur'd,
The wheat-ears as in bag are safe secur'd;

* This little heroine of my simple lays might while thus occupied have warbled forth with Rosina,

"Light as thistle-down moving which floats on the air,
Sweet gratitude's debt to this cottage I bear,
Of autumn's rich store I bring home my part,
The weight on my head, but gay joy in my heart."

Blessings of the Cottager.

And as requital of her ceaseless pain,
Some days elaps'd the pile of full-ear'd grain
Produces measur'd, for their cottage store,
Three brim-full bushels with an half and more.

As summer closes Jane the bag will fill
And carry portions to the village mill,
Which groun'd to flour with treasure on her head
Chearful my girl again to cot is led;
And as th' autumnal season nearer draws,
From mother oft my maiden gains applause,
As at her sewing she industrious sits,
Or nimbly moves the needles as she knits,
The infant nurses, and in short by heart
Seems fitted to perform the housewife's part.

Here close we now the Summer's busy time
And to fresh labours tune the cottage rhyme;
Those useful toils which make the peasant know
That industry can blunt the shafts of woe;

Plain occupations which can never cease
To yield a competence and bless with peace.
Such treasures were of honest Ralph the due,
All things around him thriv'd—his babe and Sue,
The wedded partner of life's checquer'd scene
Sound health enjoy'd—while Jane the minstrel's
queen
Happy herself, by ev'ry act confess'd
The lowly cottage girl may still be bless'd.

END OF THE SUMMER.

AUTUMN.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Poet to his Reader.—Feeding the Fowls and tending the Hives.—Giving Wash to the Sow and her Litter.—The Sunday School and Parish Clerk.—Going to Church.—Old Monument and traditional Story.—The Progeny and unintelligible Inscription.—Village Epitaph.—Several Toils of the Cottage Girl.—Jane's Astronomical Research.—Going to the Country Wake.—Several Amusements.—The Blind Fidler.—Return to the Cottage.—Churning Butter.—Drawing Water from the Well.—*Ignis Fatuus.*—Picking Nuts and Hips and Haws.—Gathering up Apples.—Pigs in an high Wind.—Farewell to the Autumn.

AUTUMN.

"The pale descending year, yet pleasing still,
A gentler mood inspires; for now the leaf
Incessant rustles from the mournful grove:
Oft startling such as, studious, walk below,
And slowly circles thro' the waving air."

THOMPSON.

COME Muse inspire me, nor contemn that lay
Which fain wou'd cast on nature's page a ray;
Humble my talents are and meek my claim
To cull a shoot from laurell'd wreath of fame,
Yet one bold truth shall rigidness disarm
Since if I do no good I teach no harm,
And tho' from me presumption ne'er shall flow,
Wretched that bard must be who cannot show

The Poet to the Reader.

Some traits to call forth plaudits on his toil,
And prove his genius is no barren soil.
Such is my hope, and if some points should raise
In candid minds a portion of just praise,
Pleas'd with my labour I shall own from thence
Their sanction is a sterling recompence.

In *Libra's* Sign the sun less ardent reigns,
When forth my maiden goes to stubble plains,
Therein by farmer paid, his pigs to turn,
Or watch the geese some useful pence to earn,
That scatter'd grain may thus, for man's own use,
Fatten the silly, but delicious goose.

At early dawn repairs my pretty Jane,
In apron bearing store of yellow grain;
When straight obedient to her call—for food
The hens collect, each follow'd by her brood,
While strutting on with finely pencil'd plumes
The little bantum cock an air assumes

Feeding Fowls and tending Bees.

Of eastern monarch, to whose high command
Obedient bows a fair circassian band:
With step sedate he rears each claw on high,
Proud of his feather'd boots of saffron dye,
And with an air so consequential feeds
He scarcely deigns to peck the scatter'd seeds,
While quite submissive hens and chickens too
With eagerness pick up—each grain in view.

Now will my Cottage Maid with care explore
The almanack improv'd of sapient *More*,
Whereby instructed she with caution sees
The passage narrow'd to each hive of bees,
Thus barring out destructive mouse and snail
Prone the wax cells of honey to assail.
To feed the pigs she'll also daily hie
And bear the brim-full pail of wash to stye,
When snorting onwards straight the sow will press
And quit her covert for the welcome mess;

Feeding Pigs and Sunday School.

With small but cunning eyes, short bristled tail,
And snout erect, she sniffs the well known pail,
While side by side her litter white and sleek
Welcome my Jane with loud discordant squeak.
Forth from the pail my maiden with a splash
Her burthen souses;—when the trough with wash
Brim-full is seen; as eagerly each snout
Delighted stirs the fatt'ning food about,
While some more eager scrambling on to eat
Plunge their two fore legs in the liquid treat.

On sabbath free from week day's lab'ring cares,
To sunday school my maiden glad repairs,
Lists to the parish clerk's instructive lore,
To Jane as learned as a sage of yore:
Hears him in nasal tones correct what's wrong,
Infusing awe throughout the infant throng,
As each a verse from holy writ will read,
Instruction gleaning for the christian's creed.
'Twas there my girl primeval knowledge gain'd
And simple grammar rules by heart retain'd,

The Church Service.

Early her mind the alphabet cou'd scan,
First source of science that enlightens man,
Whereby she learned to read those precepts rare,
Belief; Commandments and the pure Lord's pray'r.
And when to church both morn and eve she went
To hear the pastor preach the Lord's intent,
Demure she'd sit to list her Saviour's will,
Or kneeling pray his precepts to fulfill;
And when from pitch pipe sounded forth the key
For parish clerk to 'gin his psalmody,
A comely tomb on wall sinister set,
The gaze inquiring of our Jane oft met
Uncouth the figures were and strange the guise
That greeted ev'ry sabbath day her eyes,
On either side a desk, and face to face,
A male and female kneeling each held place,*

* The designation of any particular village Church, ornamented with an old monumental effigy of this description, is quite needless, as they are found in most places of worship in

Monument and Traditional Tale.

Around whose necks were sculptor'd deep and wide
Two stiffly plaited frills in buckram pride :
Black were the trappings which their forms array'd,
And thick his jacket was with knobs belaid,
While o'er his breast a monstrous belt was slung
Whereto the formidable rapier hung ;
Nor less the stomacher our Jane wou'd please
From neck of dame descending down to knees :
A story was by ev'ry rustic told
How one was famous knight Saint George of old,
While in the female each the person knew
Of her for whom the dragon dire he slew !

---

the Country ; with respect however to the traditional Story of St. George and the Dragon, the Author was once very gravely told by the Clerk of a Village Church, on inquiring whether the edifice contained any thing curious, that such a tomb was there ; which upon inspection proved to be a monument of the period of James the first, nearly in the stile above described.

The Progeny and Inscription.

Yet tho' as gospel each the tale wou'd tell,
My maiden wonder'd how it so befell
That he for one unsightly as the dame
Cou'd fight a beast that breath'd forth smoke and
flame,
Still one thing more this sculpture gave to sight
Twelve children neatly carv'd to left and right,
Six boys with girls as many fill'd th' account,
Two pair of steps progressive made to mount. *
As for inscription on a sable stone
Of gilt but tarnish'd lines full many shone,
Which oft my maiden would essay to spell
Though of their meaning naught she e'er cou'd tell,

* This ludicrous manner of placing a string of Children ranged according to their ages, the Boys behind their Father, and the Girls backing their Mother, is in every respect consonant with the *starched* manners of the age of Jemmy, of Pedantic Memory, of which period, several Monuments of this description have come under the observation of the writer.

And puzzled thus wou'd cry with simple mien,
" How strange our *English tongue* * must once have been,
" Doubtless the writing wou'd teach me some good
" If like yon tomb it were but understood :"

* This *English Tongue* of our unsophisticated maid was no more or less than a long *Latin* Inscription, which, I am sorry to add but too generally adorns the Monuments of the Great. How frequently has it struck me in walking the aisles of Westminster Abbey, that an infinite deal of morality and solemn instruction was thus lost to the multitude, independant of which on viewing the Effigies of a great man instead of blazoning forth his virtues and noble actions in the Mother tongue which is adapted to every capacity, the uneducated observer is obliged to content himself with gazing on the marble portraiture of the defunct, and is thus deprived of that knowledge which must have generated in his Soul a veneration for the departed and a love for his Native Country, which had produced a man as renowned in the annals of Virtue, Science and Glory, as the boasted page of Antiquity has handed down for the satisfaction of the inquiring mind.

When turning round she'd fix her guileless gaze
On that which late had claim'd the meed of praise.
High on the white-wash'd wall 'gainst dexter side,
Appear'd quite free from monumental pride,
The record of two souls condemn'd to dust
Whose lives had prov'd that heav'n was all their trust,
Two angels o'er the slab the eye cou'd trace,
While plump-fac'd cherubs fring'd its shadow'd base,
And in the centre, emblem of our sin,
With hour-glass death display'd a ghastly grin,
While to complete the picture thus began
After fine flourish'd names and dates, their ran
These lines, true emblem of the village bard,
Who, if he did not well,—at least strove hard.

COUNTRY EPITAPH.

Lo! here beneath two goodly souls do moulder,
Which death to everlasting life shall solder;

The Cottage Girl's various Toils.

The one was Richard—Mary was the other,
And dearly did they cherish one another;
They liv'd for good deeds and like christians died,
And when call'd hence full many a poor soul cried;
For while in this sad wretched world they breath'd
One hundred pounds to poor house they bequeath'd,
For which our minister and overseer
Commanded this stone to be set up here,

To save the pear and rescue ripening grape,
My pretty Jane ne'er suffers to escape
The lazy drone or wasp with piercing sting,
But kills them settled or when on the wing;
And when eve's dark'ning mantle veils the skies,
Her time by lamp my girl diversifies,
In knitting, spinning, mending neat her cloaths,
Or darning worsted or best sunday hose;
Nor less each parent's garb her labours share,
Their raiments tidy kept and fit to wear.

Jane's Astronomical Research.

And if from farmer's she returns home late,
Trudging with terrier o'er the fields sedate,
Thoughtful she heeds the gemmy stars shine clear
And gazes oft upon night's paly sphere,
Marking the clouds impell'd by breezy gale
'Fore the bright orb majestically sail;
Which to her fancy seems to move as fast,
As by the scudding film in part o'ercast.
Oft when behind a neighb'ring hill half seen
The orbit sheds around the light serene,
Jane with th' horizon thinks it close allied,
And straight to reach it mounts the hillock's side,
When gain'd the summit she can nought explore
Luna seems farther, than she was before. *

* This appearance of the Moon has very frequently produced an effect on the mind of the writer similar to that above described; while his Childish age rendered him incapable of forming any just idea upon the subject; and whether any subsequent acquisitions have rendered him more *truly happy*, is a question he does not wish to resolve, as it might tend to curb in the reader a laudable pursuit after science.

Going to the Wake.

Some days of fond expectancy here break
My maiden's slumbers, as the yearly *wake*
In neighb'ring village held, now near at hand,
Makes her heart beat to join the jocund band.
At length she hails the earliest dawn of light,
Long having watch'd the ling'ring shades of night,
Starts from the pallet, pigs and fowls then feeds,
Kindles the fire and prompt each duty heeds,
That no one care may long protract her stay
And keep her from the merry scene away.
Ralph who in boyhood always us'd to keep
This festive time, ne'er let the custom sleep,
So with his Sue and babe repaid Jane's care,
One tester giving to be spent at fair,
And thus ere nine all duties done at cot,
In sunday's garb array'd for wake they trot;
Jane with her gambols urging pincher on,
While arm in arm Sue hears her husband con
The varied produce which his cot affords;
What money's sav'd;—and all the winter hoards,

Playing at Fives and Coites.

When fill'd with the extatic thrill of bliss,
On lips of babe he seals paternal kiss,
With ardent pressure grasps the hand of Sue,
Whose eyes tho' silent beam affection true,
Seeming in language of the heart to own
Dear Ralph I love but you and you alone.
With spirits lightsome as Spring's healthy dawn
Our party gains the merry village lawn,
While joys bright ray illumines ev'ry mien
And tranquill pleasure rules unrivall'd queen;
Old friends an interchange of greetings make
As cordially the tender'd hand they shake;
Of past times talk and rustics, many a one
Mould'ring 'neath turf with no recording stone,
Who ne'er had fail'd to join the annual fun,
Each of the festive meeting, making one.
At length the sev'ral village sports begin,
Ralph a rare *dab* at fives sets to, to win;
With muscles large and naked arm quite tann'd,
By dext'rous force the ball obeys his hand;

Nine Pins, Cudgelling and Jumping in Sacks.

Sometimes aloft against the wall t'will bound,
Or top the line swift skimming o'er the ground.
Others at quoits essay their skill to show
And with judicious force the iron throw;
Then if some able hand the pin ring's clean,
Pleasure thro' half the party straight is seen,
While their opponents equally essay
To cope against them with as finish'd play.
Alike at nine-pins too the lads will bowl
And level six at one judicious roll,
While others to a ruder pastime led
In wielding cudgels get a broken head.
But midst these revels Jane was better pleas'd
To view them swarming up a pole well greas'd,
Striving amain the summit to acquire
For gold lac'd hat the gift of village squire.
From these delighted would my maiden speed,
The grinning competition near to heed,
As thro' horse-collars for a smock-frock new
Contortions direful met the gazer's view;

Jumping in Sacks, Hot Dumplings, Running for Smock, &c.

Loud laughter draws from thence my little maid
To mark in sacks, some jumping hawbucks ray'd,
When lo the foremost falling blocks the way,
And those behind him check'd, soon sprawling lay.
Nor let that *noble* pastime be forgot
Of gobbling dumplings up all smoking hot,
When each with scarlet cheek and tearful eye,
Wreaths, puffs, and blows with blist'ring mouth
awry.
Females alike contribute to the sport
As each true *Atalanta* shews her fort,
With fleetness racing for the ribbands blue
That bind the Holland shift of milky hue.
Nor let the poor blind *Orpheus* 'scape the bard
Whose *harmony* results from *lab'ring hard,*
As while o'er fiddle strings he strenuous rakes
The worn out bow—his head incessant shakes,
So with each second will the elbow jirk,
And limbs and body writhe at ev'ry quirk;

Yet though these tones from hand untutor'd flow,
No grace inspiring; no harmonious glow;
Still ev'ry couple dancing will declare
Apollo cou'd not match him were he there,
Nor will the polish'd ball room of the great,
Blazing with splendor, beauty, pomp and state,
No nor she soul of harmony combine
And make felicity thus purely shine,
No envy here diffuses pois'nous gall,
Each with himself content—joy beams on all.

Such were the revels which my maid amus'd,
And transports o'er each mental pow'r diffus'd,
As home repairing with the setting sun
Incessant she to Ralph let prattle run,
Making anew the pleasures past appear
And painting those of the ensuing year.

From revel scenes the faithful muse shall turn
To show his Cottage Girl engag'd at churn,

Drawing Water from the Well.

When patient up and down the stick she'll move,
Till lumps adhesive seen above the groove
Evince, the yellow cream is thick'ning fast,
Which to consistency will come at last;
But if incessant toil is tried in vain
"The churn's bewitch'd" she cries "and that is plain,"
Then near the fire the vessel white will bear
And work till butter shall requite her care.

For use of cot when mother 'er demands
From well fresh water,—she obeys commands,
Forth to the same with willing speed ne'er fails
To bear with chearfulness her empty pails:
The iron handle of the bucket fast
Links to the hook, which straight in well is cast,
When urg'd by weight the rope uncoils amain,
The handle rattling whirls, as clank of chain
Echoes descending with discordant knell,
And gains with splash the bottom of the well.

Ignis Fatuus

'Tis then her little hands my Jane applies
The rope to wind and make the vessel rise,
Which gradually ascends the circle deep
While jirk of bucket oft adown the steep
Part of its brimfull chrystal charge distills,
That dripping with a liquid echo fills
The stone-lin'd chasms damp and slipp'ry wall,
Which loud reverberates each splashing fall.

Sometimes as twilight on the view doth fade
My girl returning o'er the humid glade,
Bends on the distance her affrighted glance
Viewing deceitful *Ignis fatuus* dance.
Approaching now, then flitting 'fore the view
A flame chimerical of paly hue;
Delusive beacon—unsubstantial fire,
To bog decoying or the marshy mire.

Now chills of evening and the leaves embrown'd
Show nature's page by fading autumn crown'd,

Gathering Nuts, Hips and Haws and Picking up Apples.

As forth the gentle subject of my strains
To woods repairing, quits the open plains,
Where oily nuts quite bronz'd she will acquire
For parent's cracking by the christmas fire,
When some good village friend drops in to sup,
Sharing rich draughts from ev'ry home brew'd cup;
As slices of bak'd bread delicious float
Enrich'd by grated nutmeg's spicy coat.
Or now 'neath prickly hedge she will repose
To gather hips and haws or jet black sloes,
Produce delicious to the childish mind,
Thrice happy in a state thus unrefin'd.

Yet soft, for now both morn and evening cold,
With sharp winds blowing round the leafy gold,
Tend with good coin my maiden's purse to fill,
Hir'd to pick apples for the cider mill;
'Tis then in orchard for the farmer she
Collects the fruit shook down from ev'ry tree.

Pigs in an High Wind.

And when the horse pursues his circling course,
And mill-stone crushes with its pond'rous force,
My little maid proceeding in the track
Stirs up anew the mash for stone to crack,
Which when completely bruis'd, to press is ta'en
Thro' cloths of hair its liquid sweets to drain.

As whistling winds now strew the leaves around,
Which in collected circles sweep the ground,
Jane oft will laugh to view the swinish rout
Squeaking and raising high in air the snout,
With motion awkward and tails twisted tight
Scamp'ring away as if impell'd by fright;
Pausing—they cunning look—before—behind,
(From whence 'tis said that grunters see the wind)
Then ere a minute's halt, with silly face
Resume anew the clumsy crazy race.

Of *Sagittarius* now begins the sway,
As frowning winter clad in fell array,

Adieu to Autumn.

Expiring autumn links in icy band,
And blights it struggling, in its ruthless hand.
Then farewell now the sun's all glad'ning beams,
The glossy verdure streak'd with silv'ry streams;
Those leafy honours that adorn'd the trees
And wav'd luxuriant in the passing breeze:
To all the Cottage Girl must bid adieu,
'Mid frost and snow contented to pursue
Such occupations as the season yields,
Within the cot or 'midst the sterile fields.
Where now the Bard inducts his fav'rite child,
His theme pure nature—breath'd in numbers wild,
For which he closes the autumnal tale,
The final labours of his girl to hail;
Which to pursue the fav'ring muse takes flight,
For torpid realms in ice and snow bedight,
Where angry Boreas in discordance reigns,
The bellowing monarch of the dreary plains;

Adieu to Autumn.

As hail and rain unite with drifting snow
A chilling garb o'er nature's page to throw,
Till spring, gay summer's nurse, from bondage free
Usurps once more her fost'ring sov'reignty.

END OF AUTUMN.

WINTER.

THE ARGUMENT.

Cottage Girl and Town-bred Miss compared.—Feeding the Pigeons and Partridge.—The Hedger and Ditcher.—Threshing and Fowls assembled at the Barn door.—Making up the *Helm* Sheaves for Thatching.—Christmas and New Years Days, time for Feasting.—Ralph's Regale.—Feeding the Bees—Ewes and the yeaning Lambs.—Cruelty of the Crow.—Sportsman and his Pointers.—Shooting Partridges.—Hunting. Coursing.—Rearing *Tidling* Lamb.—Flight from the angry Cow.—Nursing a Baby.—Lulling it to Rest.—The Snow Storm.—The Parents allarm.—Ralph goes in pursuit of Jane—Pincher's Fidelity.—The Cottage Girl Found.—Resucitation.—Caresses bestowed on the Dog.—Setting Duck's and Hen's Nests.—Thawing an Icicle.—Farrowing the Sow.—Conclusive Wish of the Poet.

WINTER.

"Low, the Woods
Bow their hoar head; and, ere the languid Sun
Faint from the West emits his evening ray,
Earth's universal face, deep hid, and chill,
Is one wide dazzling waste, that buries wide
The works of Man,"

THOMPSON.

HOW harsh seems winter's wind to female forms,
Which pamper'd ne'er have brav'd its furious storms,
Whose limbs unshrouded by the ample fold
Are well secur'd from drenching rain and cold;
Yet still are render'd doubly safe from harm
Wafted from home in glitt'ring carriage warm.
Indulgence such as this my girl ne'er knew,
Inur'd from cradle she was taught to view

Feeding Pigeons and Partridge.

Each change of season quite devoid of fear,
Content to toil thro' the revolving year.
With her no dread had *Capricornus'* Sign,
No elemental war kept her supine;
She knew her duty and perform'd with care
Those avocations she was doom'd to share.

Each morn behold her now the pigeons tend,
Whose sleek and pencil'd plumes she'll oft commend,
As tame they peck the peas before her feet,
Tho' sailing when on wing so passing fleet.
The fowls alike her tender aid demand
Nutrition gaining from her scatt'ring hand;
Nor less the partridge by her cares alive,
Tam'd to her will appears each day to thrive.

Now as in spring to self same toil applied
She for the farmer scatters ant-hills wide,

Hedger and Ditcher described.

And lab'ring thus in field will often view
The hedger there his prickly toil pursue, *
His hands by strongest leathern gloves secur'd
Against assailing thorns are safe insur'd;
An apron girded fast his loins around
Enshields his person from the goading wound;
While either leg with gaiter strong supplied
Guards him from ill by leather thong well tied!
The quick-set hedge with bill-hook then he crops,
And ev'ry stragg'ling bough his weapon lops;
And oft in bank, supporting stakes will drive
To prop the weaken'd hedge and make it thrive.

* The elder *Barker's* inimitable representation of *The Woodman*, is the most finished picturesque illustrative of the writer's ideas that the pencil of an artist ever yet produced, not that the performance in question stands in need of any panegric, as its superior excellence was its own passport to that public applause which was so justly its due.

Threshing and Fowls at the Barn Door.

For beasts alike my girl bears straw to eat,
And from good *Snowdrop* drains the liquid sweet,
The cream will churn, and to her needle true
Keep ev'ry call of industry in view.

Returning home the deadning sound of flail
With din quite regular, will oft assail
My maiden's ear, and 'lure her straight to view
The peasant thresh the corn with stroke so true;
Or now thro' sieve the golden grain is pass'd
Winnow'd by fan whirl'd round with motion fast,
Cleansing from husks the crisp luxuriant corn,
Just symbol of, prolific *Ceres* horn;
While fowls and chicks before the barn are seen
Anxious awaiting scatter'd grains to glean;
As some more daring eagerly explore,
Perch'd on the barrier plac'd before the door,
The piles of corn; for which they bold make flight,
Of danger fearless, 'lur'd by tempting sight.

Making *Helm* Sheaves and Christmas Day.

When threshing's o'er they labour last to find
And in *helm* sheaves * the longest straw will bind,
Fit for the thatching barns, or cots, or mows,
Or sheds to shelter weanling calves and cows.

From toils the bard shall now withhold the rhyme,
To sing the joyous hours of Christmas time;
Memoriol sacred of that epoch:—when
The Son of God redeem'd the sons of men.
At village church my girl first offers praise
And with devotion pastor's will obeys,
Then at the cot the Christmas carrol reads,
While at her Saviour's pangs her bosom bleeds:
That patient Lamb, whose unoffending blood
Was shed to cleanse the world and make it good.

* Those Sheaves which have suffered least from the strokes of the flail, while under the operation of threshing, are carefully selected for the purposes of thatching and are called *Helm* Sheaves.

And with her parents as the coming night
Glooms wide around—she feels a pure delight,
For village friends to toast the chesnuts brown,
And fetch for father jug with frothy crown;
While converse innocent and free from vice
Wou'd oft th' attention of my girl entice;
Who tutor'd thus ne'er owns ambition's glow,
Glad to perform her humble task below.

In spite of weather next the New Year's day
Diffuses thro' the cot a cheerful ray,
Rich ale and cider then good Ralph bestows
As ev'ry comer's bosom joyful glows:
Some smoke their pipes and others pence will set
As playing *Fox and Goose* their throats they wet;
While Jane in silence watchfull of their game,
Appears quite anxious to acquire the same.
'Tis now of nuts she brings the welcome hoard,
Of hulls bereft to grace the festive board.

Feeding Bees.

While rustics tuning up their pipes to sing,
With boist'rous clangour roar, "*God save the king*."
Then hiss in pan the eggs and bacon, nice;
As plac'd on brown bread many a luscious slice
Of toasted cheese quite fat regales the guest,
O'erjoy'd to share with Ralph the homely feast.

Enough of pleasure now the muse hath told,
Thy theme, dear industry, anew enroll'd,
Once more to action shall my offspring lead
For toil yields store against the hour of need.
Aquarius drear his chilling frost now brings,
And wafts his snows on boreas' bellowing wings,
Or sleety rain which drifting blasts impell
Still more augments the whirlwind's whistling knell.

One hive of bees preserv'd my Jane befriends,
And to their weakned state assistance lends,
Brown sugar mingling up with heartning beer,
To keep them healthy for the coming year.

Weanling Calves, Ewes and yeaning Lambs.

The farmer's weanling calves now hous'd in shed,
To turnip fields my maiden next is led,
The yeaning lambs to watch, when sucking ewes,
'Gainst fell attacks of cruel rav'nous crows,
Which conscious of the tender lambkin's age,
If unprotected left, will oft engage
Its form defenceless, spite of piteous cries,
And forth remorseless pluck its tender eyes.*
How strange that nature thus to one should give
Instinct to slay what it has caus'd to live:
Yet hold, why murmur at the seeming ill,
Since man supreme his brother man will kill;
God is the judge, arraign not his behest,
Tho' strange to us, whate'er he does is best.

* ——— Will you put out mine eyes?
These eyes that never did, nor never shall,
So much as frown on you. ———

King John.

The Sportsman and his Pointers.

From flooded ditches and a wat'ry grave
'Tis equally her care the lambs to save,
Which, if unguarded, would ere long be found,
In drain or water-course o'erflowing, drown'd.
And thus employ'd the sportsman oft she'll trace
Trudging o'er fields with pointer dogs a brace,
That eager scent for game the land around
With tails distended, noses bent to ground:
Sudden the well-bred dog the birds will *point*,
When halting with one fore leg crouch'd at joint,
His hungry stare bespeaks the game in view,
While nostrils moving show his point is true.
Now rapid passes on the sportsman keen
As piece cock'd ready, for the aim is seen,
Advancing on, with tones approving, oft
"*Steady my dog*," he cries—"*now steady—soft*;"
With rattling sound anon the covey springs,
Quite low their flight, as heavy move their wings;
When lo! the sportsman taking murd'rous aim,
His double-barrel levels at the game,

And ere two seconds, twice the bang is heard,
Each bringing down to earth a stricken bird:
While, fraught with mercy, as the deed is done,
Jane sighs "*Thank heav'n my partridge is not one.*"

Sometimes the neighb'ring squire and friends she'll view
All ably mounted fleet the game pursue;
As in their front the eager dogs give tongue,
A strain to sportsman sweet as e'er was rung.
Now 'midst the valley will sly renard glide,
Now mount the steep or course the hillock's side,
As close together skims the pack so fleet
Just fit for *cov'ring with an ample sheet.**
Nor pass we by the graceful greyhound slim,
Mild in the visage;—tenuous of limb;

* This term is used by Sportsmen when the Pack run close as they cannot bear to see the hounds stragg'ling in all directions, when in pursuit of the game.

Coursing and rearing a *Tiddling* Lamb.

With mouse-skin ears erect, and piercing eyes,
Starting with slender curving tail for prize.
Now puss will double, while the greyhound, too,
Wheels after loss of way; regaining view,
Till spent with striving 'gainst superior force,
Puss falls the victim, and thus ends the course.

And now if ewe of tender lambs yeans three
One home is 'taen the *tiddling* lamb to be,*
Where snug by fire, the *innocent* Jane heeds
And there the motherless with rich milk feeds;
Till quite domestic grown it shows no dread
But playful oft 'gainst stranger buts its head;
Or taught by Cottage Girl round farmer's yard
Will to o'ertake her in her flight strive hard.

* As the Ewe is not capable of affording nutriment to three lambs at once, upon yeaning that number one is taken from her and kept in the house, being fed with milk and denominated a *Tiddling Lamb.*

Flight from pursuit of Cow.

The sucking lambs now stronger grown,—for rack
Jane bears to field the hay upon her back.
Whence homeward bound, and striving with her
breath
To warm her frost-nipt fingers, cold as death;
'Twill chance, as o'er a meadow thus she'll go,
Some cow, of calf bereft, will strive to throw
Her fleeing form, as to clear stile with speed
She panting flies for safety in this need. *

In southern hemisphere now *Pisces* mark,
As days curtail'd by morn and evening dark,
The blighting attributes of winter bring,
Who reigns o'er earth the stern terrific king.

* It will very frequently occur, that a Cow upon having her calf taken from her, will pursue any persons coming in her way with intent to throw them; being instigated thereto from excess of feeling, on account of the loss she has sustained.

Lulling a Baby and Snow-Storm.

In cottage now the muse's offspring bland,
To ev'ry toil applies her willing hand:
But ah! what sisterly affection glows,
As round an infant brother's neck she throws,
Her loving arms, while tenderly she'll talk,
And then on floor behold him toddling walk:
Utter to please, a thousand winning names,
And fondling play the nurse's antic games.
Such little histories delighted tell
As "*This pig went to market :—ding dong bell.*"
Or peevish grown, 'fore face her hand she'll keep,
Exclaiming "Who sees naughty boy? —Boo peep."
And when reclining on her gentle breast
She strives to lull the baby to its rest:
"*See, Saw,*" in soothing tones she'll then repeat,
As softly rocking to and fro the seat.

'Twas now in field attending lamb and ewe
Jane was o'ertaken by a storm of snow;
Which thickly fell in feath'ry flakes around,
Clothing with spotless white the champaign ground;

Snow-Storm, and the Mother in alarm.

And thus accumulating by degrees
Its weight bent low the boughs of leafless trees,
While from the north the bleak enfuriate blast
In hillocks high the frozen water cast.
With limbs quite numb'd, as hands and visage too
Nipt by the cold assum'd a blueish hue,
And head low bent from cutting wind to guard
Her chill-struck face, my little maid toil'd hard
Against the blast, which rude oppos'd her course,
Nearly subduing her resisting force.
With tail 'twixt hind legs and his ears flat laid
Companion *Pincher* slunk behind my maid :
No gambols did her terrier then pursue,
His instinct having naught save cot in view ;
Yet when benumb'd fate did her course arrest,
The dog ne'er left my cottage girl opprest,
But near her form with true affection clung,
While on the winds his dismal howlings rung.
But heav'n in mercy feeling for her state
Now turn'd aside the chilling hand of fate.

The Mother in alarm, Pincher's fidelity, and Jane found.

As Ralph, from morning's toil at neighb'ring farm
To cot return'd, found Susan in alarm;
Tears bath'd her cheeks as she in accents wild
Exclaim'd "O! God, I fear we've lost our child;
"Three hours and more our girl has been away
"Expos'd to tempests of this bitter day;
"Whereas one hour, had nothing ill befell,
"Might have suffic'd to see her home and well."
Ralph tho' affrighted too, conceal'd his fears,
And rush'd from cottage leaving Sue in tears;
High swell'd his bosom with paternal thrill,
Seeming to augur some approaching ill.
Heedless of snow his flutt'ring heart appall'd,
Yearning for Jane aloud her name oft call'd,
When ah! what terrors wrung his soul at last,
As Pincher howling ran towards him fast,
Then back returning o'er the snowy bed
Ralph scarce respiring by the dog was led,
Where 'neath an hedge thick canopied by snow
His child he view'd—a sight to pierce with woe:

Means adopted for Resuciation.

Her frame nigh buried, save where Pincher true
Had clear'd the snow to keep her face in view. *
Ejaculating loud his Saviour's name,
The father rear'd his daughter's torpid frame;
Seal'd on her lips the agonizing kiss,
While faithful Pincher, quite o'ercome with bliss,
As Ralph gaz'd breathless on her still pale lip,
Loud bark'd his pleasure with a joyful skip;

* Circumstances similar to the above are not uncommon in the Country as an event of this nature was described to the writer by an elderly person who had been bred up in a farm house when young, and to whom an accident like the present occurred when she was about fifteen years of age, upon which occasion had it not been for a large Dog named Lion, she must inevitably have perished, being buried up to the Chin; the repeated howls of the animal however, where at length heard by the owners of the farm as the accident took place within two fields of the house, when, assistance being dispatched, she was dug out black and motionless, and many hours elapsed ere the re-animated blood gave symptoms that the vital spark was not totally extinguished.

Jane restored and Pincher Caress'd.

Yet all in vain he sought the fond embrace,
Benumb'd her frame and icy cold her face;
When in his arms enwrap'd by fear subdu'd,
His steps once more the way to cot pursu'd;
Where safe arriv'd, to trembling Sue at door
He straight deliver'd up the precious store;
Then on the hearth heap'd faggots dry to raise
A crackling fire and make a fervid blaze.
While Jane, of clothes bereft, in blanket warm,
Soon felt the vital glow pervade her form.
In pipkin then was heated elder wine
Sugar'd and spic'd, which, pass'd thro' strainer fine,
To Cottage Girl afforded bev'rage good,
New motion giving to the sluggard blood.
At length reviv'd, my Jane began to tell
How all the bus'ness of the morn befell;
Retail'd the anguish which her limbs assail'd,
Till quite subdu'd, her body's vigour fail'd;
Then Ralph where Jane left off pursu'd the thread,
How by his faithful terrier he was led,

Setting Duck's and Hen's Nests.

And just arriv'd to save life's parting breath
As deep in snow emerg'd, nigh froze to death,
Jane, but for shaggy Pincher's fost'ring care,
Beyond all human aid had perish'd there.
Caresses tenfold on the dog were heap'd,
Who wagg'd his tail as on each lap he leap'd,
While he of viands got a double feed,
For saving Cottage Maid in this fell need.

My little girl, who ne'er from labour rests,
Now watches ducks and hens to set their nests,
As birds aquatic oft to ponds will stray,
There cunning, *stealing nests* their eggs to lay.
The hens will often too deposit sly
Their produce far from ken of human eye,
Which Jane alike in safety home will take,
For ev'ry fowl in spot secure to make
The nest anew, thus 'scaping rav'nous pow'r
Of rats and stoats, both eager to devour.
And when in nest each bird hath laid its store,
If insufficient Jane thereto adds more :

The Icicle.

As for the duck of eggs some sixteen, then
In nest are plac'd ; and fifteen for the hen ;
One yielding with the closing month to view
Ducklings with downy coats of yellow hue ;
While the young brood of chicks by three weeks
close,
Hatch'd from each shelly case, their forms expose.

From eaves of fowl-house oft my girl will tear
The crystal icicle appendant there,
Whose tap'ring form transparent, pleas'd she views,
Tho' through her hand 'twill icy cold infuse ;
Then o'er her lips she to and fro will draw
Its needle point, as heat will gradual thaw,
While ev'ry snow white tooth a numbness feels,
As from the melting spear—ice-water steals. *

* The ensuing Stanzas of our Immortal Bard of Avon, being so appropriate to this season are here introduced to illustrate the subject under consideration.

"When icicles hang by the wall,
And Dick the Shepherd blows his nail ;

Sow Farrowing

As broods, are thriving, Jane's attention, now,
Is call'd to 'tend the litter teeming sow,
Whose pond'rous belly nearly sweeps the ground,
Type of the numbers which therein abound.
Still in despite of Jane's observant eye,
And constant toil to keep the beast near sty,

And Tom bears logs into the hall.
And milk comes frozen home in pail,
When blood is nipt and ways be foul
Then nightly sings the staring Owl
Tu-whit! to who!
A merry note,
While greasie Jane doth keel the pót."

"When all aloud the wind doth blow,
And coughing drowns the Parson's saw;
And Bird's sit brooding in the snow,
And Marian's nose looks red and raw,
When roasted crabs kiss in the bowl
Then nightly sings the staring owl
Tu-whit! to who!
A merry note,
While greasie Jane doth keel the pot.

Sow farrowing.

Distant from cot her bulky form will roam,
And in a ditch she farrows, far from home;
The squeaking litter there my girl attends,
And all the sucking offspring then befriends,
Fearful lest sow should turn her form so big,
And thus o'erlay a tender sucking pig.
To sow alike the caudle she must deal,
Prepar'd with potent beer and barley meal,
Heated, to give the grunting mother strength,
And borne in pail where suck'd she lies at length.
Ralph to watch sow that night with lanthorn goes,*
Tending the litter, careless of repose;

* The writer was an eye-witnes to a circumstance of this nature, which occurred on one of the bitterest nights he ever remembers to have experienced. Two men on that occasion sat up with the Sow, which had farrowed her Litter consisting of no less than Seventeen, and as the season was so inclement the narrator whose residence was not far distant sent the Countrymen a quantity of strong beer warmed with nutmeg and a little brandy mixed in the same; fearful that the cold might overcome and set them to sleep when their lives would in all likelihood have been sacrificed to their watchful assiduity.

Getting Sow and Litter to the Stye and Conclusion.

There wrap'd in coat and blanket patient stays,
As Jane to him by eight the meal conveys,
When, supper ended, back she hies to cot
And pities much her father's chilling lot,
Then after hours of sound and healthful sleep,
Which with the balm of peace her thoughts ensteep,
Back to her father with return of day,
Led by affection true, she wends her way,
And, ere the breakfast hour, to stye leads back,
The lazy mother and her squeaking pack,
When Sue, quite glad to see her Ralph at last,
Gives him the babe, and spreads the morn's repast
Which, by the sauce of hunger season'd, shows
That health brings appetite without repose.

Here terminates the muse his rustic lays,
Four seasons closing of his offspring's days,
The humble maid, who, happy in her state,
Of sin unconscious, fears no frowns of fate;
Labour brings health that mantles o'er her face,
While innocence imbues her soul with grace,

Conclusion.

Such is my Jane, who still to this adds more,
Of faith in God, an all-sufficient store,
To guide her steps to that divine retreat,
Where virtue finds an everlasting seat.

Then, farewell! Maiden, may'st thou ceaseless show,
Obedience to thy parents here below;
May'st thou be govern'd by each heav'nly truth,
That adds fresh lustre to maturing youth:
So shall thine ev'ry act propitious prove,
A Cottage Girl deserv'd the Poet's love.

FINIS.

J. Browne, Printer, Bath.